



PIG HEALTH

UPDATE

PIG PRODUCTION NEWSLETTER FROM MSD ANIMAL HEALTH

ISSUE 5 | SPRING 2022



January this year saw the introduction of European legislation regarding the prescription and use of antibiotics and in June further legislation will ban the use of therapeutic zinc oxide. The challenge of keeping pigs healthy and productive will involve many farms making changes to their management systems. In this issue of Pig Health Update, we take a look at ways vaccination can play a role.

There's no denying that the pig industry has faced unprecedented challenges this year, with the war in Ukraine and resulting volatility in feed prices causing real concern. So it is heartening to read that Global AgriTrends are forecasting a significant increase in demand for global protein (and specifically pork) over the next 10 years.

Here's looking to brighter future,

Thomas Gallagher,
Swine Business Unit Director

IT'S GREAT TO BE BACK!

After a long two years of not being able to meet up in person, the pig industry is finally able to start organising and attending events. As well as an opportunity to catch up with friends and colleagues, it also gives us the chance to learn, discuss and exchange ideas.

The MSD Animal Health Pig Team recently hosted a technical event with vets from across Ireland to discuss the challenges around antibiotic reduction and the forthcoming zinc oxide. Guest speakers from Germany and the Netherlands discussed gut health and respiratory disease and some of the specific challenges affecting the management of these issues on farm.

At the Progressive Lean Pigs producer meeting in Omagh earlier this month, there was a focus on the role of gut health and the importance of colostrum and weaning management to improve outcomes for growing pigs. Farmers joined in a lively discussion on proactive approaches to current production challenges.

April also sees the welcome return of the Irish Pig Health Society (IPHS) Symposium in Portlaoise. This year's topics will be particularly useful at this time, as they cover feed, pig health, technology, welfare and a discussion around the recent challenges to the industry.

As always, the MSD Animal Health Pig Team will be on hand to discuss any products or queries and to catch up with old friends. See you there!

ALL YOU NEED FOR A NEEDLE-FREE INTRADERMAL FUTURE



Use medicines responsibly. Legal Category: ROI [POM] NI [POM-V]

For information on side effects, precautions, warnings and contra-indications please see the Summary of Product Characteristics or contact your veterinary practitioner or MSD Animal Health, Red Oak North, South County Business Park, Leopardstown, Dublin 18 Ireland.
Tel: +353 (0)1 2970220. Email: vet-support.ie@msd.com Web: www.msd-animal-health.ie

THE IDAL[®] WAY
• Needle-free • Efficacy • Innovation •



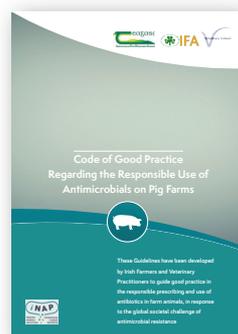
ANTIMICROBIAL CHANGES: At a Glance

The new regulation requires that antimicrobials are not used routinely or to compensate for poor hygiene, inadequate animal husbandry or poor farm management.

- ✓ Antimicrobials are only allowed for prevention (prophylaxis) in 'exceptional cases' for administration to an individual animal or restricted number of animals when the risk of infection is very high and consequences are likely to be severe. In the event of an antibiotic being used in 'exceptional' cases for prophylaxis, it will all be limited in quantity and duration to the treatment to cover the risk of an individual animal.
- ✓ A prescription for antimicrobials for the prevention of disease spread (metaphylaxis) may only to be issued after diagnosis of infection, when the risk of spread of an infection is high and when no other appropriate alternatives are available.
- ✓ Antimicrobials will be prescribed by vets acting within a Client-Patient-Practice-Relationship (CPPR) in line with the Veterinary Council of Ireland's Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Practitioners.
- ✓ A prescription for antimicrobials is now only valid for five days from date of issue and must be used within this timeframe. The animals can then be treated for as long as is specified by the vet on the prescription.



MAINTAINING PIG WELFARE WITH REDUCED ANTIBIOTICS



New regulations regarding the control and use of veterinary medicinal products and medicated feed came into force on 28th January 2022.

They aim to increase the availability of these products across the EU and to address the One Health One

Welfare challenges of Antimicrobial Resistance and antiparasitic resistance by guaranteeing the highest level of public health, animal health and environmental protection. However, the introduction of the legislation presents challenges to pig farmers and vets, especially with the forthcoming ban on zinc oxide later this year.

The Code of Practice Regarding the Responsible Use of Antimicrobials on Pig Farmers (Veterinary Ireland, Teagasc, IFA) recommends that farmers adopt a 'Prevention is better than cure' approach that incorporates Herd Health planning, biosecurity, vaccination and good husbandry.

Bacterial diseases such as *Lawsonia intracellularis* (ileitis), APP, Glassers, *S.suis* and *Mycoplasma hyopneumoniae* can all be controlled using vaccination and studies have also linked their use with a reduction in antimicrobial prescribing. Research also shows that the effective control of viral diseases such as PRRS or porcine circovirus, can also have a positive impact on a range of bacterial issues on farm.

Speak to your vet about a Herd Health Plan for your farm that incorporates alternatives to antibiotics where appropriate. Ensure it is kept up to date and that everyone on the farm is following the recommendations.



Farmer Case Studies

Patrick O'Connor



In April last year, Patrick O'Connor noticed that his second stage weaners weren't thriving, with pale pigs, the presence of loose granular faeces and increased mortality.

Patrick spoke to his vet, Miguel Rueda Lopez from Ark Animal Care who confirmed the presence of the bacteria *Lawsonia intracellularis*, the cause of ileitis. As a result, Patrick began using a new vaccine, Porcilis Lawsonia, via the intradermal IDAL system mixed with another vaccine, Porcilis PCV ID at weaning.

Within a couple of weeks of introducing the vaccine, Patrick had noticed an improvement in the pigs and felt everything was stabilising. At that point, he began using a blend of organic acids in the drinking water and that seemed to further improve things, allowing Patrick and his vet, Miguel to remove in-feed medication.

Having successfully tackled the issues with ileitis and eliminated in-feed medication, Patrick turned his mind to reducing, and ultimately removing, zinc oxide. The process of introducing the vaccine and removing antibiotics and zinc oxide took around 3 months and was a result of collaboration between Patrick, his vet Miguel and his nutritionist, Barry Hoare from Cargill.

"A year on and we've seen a real improvement and that's a good thing given the way feed prices have gone recently. There's nothing fancy or high tech about what I did, just basic improvements over a period of time, in conjunction with regular consultation with our vet and nutritionist. I say to people, be patient, give it six months – if I can do it, so can you. In hindsight I should have done it 5 years ago."

Gareth Marry

Gareth Marry from Co. Meath started vaccinating all the piglets on his 500+ sow farm after his vet positively identified the presence of *Lawsonia intracellularis* on the farm through post-mortem and laboratory testing. The piglets receive Porcilis Lawsonia at 28 days, at the same time as Porcilis PCV M Hyo.

"In these financially lean times for pig farming, it's a smart decision to vaccinate against ileitis. You don't want to be wasting your feed in an invisible way. Vaccination saves money in that you have fewer truckloads of feed coming through your gate."

"Since I took over the farm in 2015, we've constantly measured feed conversion and growth rates, so I've been able to prove without any doubt that we've made huge improvements in performance as a result of vaccinating against ileitis"

Lawsonia infection causes inflammation and thickening of the gut wall resulting in long-term reduction in food absorption and digestive efficiency. Even subclinical infection can affect performance indicators such as FCR and ADWG for the rest of the pig's life.

Gareth has succeeded in reducing FCR to under 2.4:1 and has seen a huge improvement across a wide range of production metrics, producing more pigs, to a heavier weight, in less time and with more uniformity.

Disease Update: Meningitis (*Streptococcus suis*)

Maureen Prendergast MVB, PhD, MRCVS, Technical Manager Integrated Livestock, MSD Animal Health



Streptococcus (S.) suis infection is one of the most significant causes of disease and economic loss affecting post weaned pigs. *S. suis* is the most common cause of meningitis in pigs submitted to veterinary diagnostic laboratories across all Ireland and is second only to pneumonia as the cause of death in young pigs. The bacteria are often carried asymptotically in the tonsils of normal pigs and is most commonly spread from one pig to another by direct nose to nose contact.

Infection can be present in herds without always causing recognisable clinical disease and is often found alongside porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS), PCV2 and Swine Influenza. As a result, the use of in-feed antimicrobials in growing pigs may mask the presence of *S. suis* on Irish farms, only for it to become more apparent as the medication is removed.

Typically, meningitis is seen in the post-weaning period. It may involve from one to five per cent of the herd. While *S. suis* is most often associated with meningitis, it also causes multiple joint infections, arthritis, heart conditions and abortion. Affected piglets may be treated individually with injections of specific antibiotics and should be kept comfortable and warm. Alteration of management to minimise stress from overcrowding, poor ventilation and draughts, mixing and moving pigs is a key factor in control. Preventive programmes include the use of vaccination in herds endemically and clinically affected by *S. suis*. Speak to your vet if you are concerned about bacterial challenges on farm and how best to identify and manage them.

Porcilis® PIG

VERSION 1.0.2 NOW AVAILABLE

MSD Animal Health has relaunched the popular Porcilis®Pig app, with updated disease information and improved functionality. The app can be used on smart phones and tablets and includes easy-to-navigate sections focusing on the relevant diseases affecting the main three production stages in pig farms and does not require Wi-fi to access details.

Porcilis®Pig is free to download through the App Store on IOS and through Play Store on android devices. Existing users should find that the app automatically updates to the newer version 1.0.2.



Porcilis® PRRS

Proven Performance

THE PRRS VACCINE FOR THE ENTIRE HERD



Porcilis PRRS is a live freeze dried vaccine containing PRRS virus strain DV for intramuscular or intradermal vaccination from 2 weeks of age.

Legal categories ROK | POM | NI | POM-V

Use medicines responsibly

For information on side effects, precautions, warnings and contra-indications please see the Summary of Product Characteristics or contact Veterinary Practitioner or MSD Animal Health, Red Oak North, South County Business Park, Leopardstown, Dublin 18, Ireland. Tel: +353 (0)1 297 0220. E-Mail: [vet-support.ie@msd.com](mailto:veter-support.ie@msd.com) Web: www.msd-animal-health.ie



ILEU-94-22 Feb 2022

For further information see your veterinary practitioner or contact MSD Animal Health, Red Oak North, South County Business Park, Leopardstown, Dublin 18, Ireland. Tel: +353 (1) 2970220. E-Mail: [vet-support.ie@msd.com](mailto:veter-support.ie@msd.com) Web: www.msd-animal-health.ie